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Why Allen Dulles Was Chosen to Go Into Mississippi

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WASHINGTON — Allen W. Dulles was chosen for the mission to Mississippi because it was felt that he would not be a "red flag" to the racial extremists there.

Administration sources said the situation called for a man



Mississippi Gov. Paul Johnson (left) and Allen Dulles as they conferred Wednesday in Jackson, Miss. (UPI)

above politics whose reputation for integrity and whose qualities of prudence and caution were unquestioned.

The former director of the Central Intelligence Agency seemed eminently qualified to represent President Johnson and to discuss with Mississippi's Gov. Paul Johnson the problem of law observance raised by the influx of Northern civil rights workers, these sources emphasized.

WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMEN HAVE gone out of their way to stress that Dulles is not on an investigative assignment, pointing out that the Federal Bureau of Investigation is in charge of gathering the facts in the disappearance and suspected murder of three youthful civil rights workers.

Other sources agreed with this evaluation of Dulles's mission but noted that his CIA background may serve him well in making an objective analysis of the dangerous situation, in which Mississippi segregationists have threatened to resist with force the alleged "invasion" of the Northern students bent on aiding Negroes in their equality struggle.

In the background of President Johnson's choice of Dulles is the conviction that anyone associated with the Justice Department would only tend to inflame an already impassioned populace.

ATTY. GEN. ROBERT F. KENNEDY made this point to the anxious parents of two of the missing youths, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Goodman of New York City and Nathan Schwerner of Pelham, N.Y., only a few hours before the Dulles's appointment was made.

He said the government agency or department most hated in Mississippi is the Justice Department and he is the man most hated. This added to the limitations of the law already imposed on him and the department he heads; he suggested

Kennedy defined in some detail the legal limitations on the federal government, and then realized how hollow such technicalities must seem to parents on the verge of open grief. He apologized to them, and thanked them for their patience in listening.

He promised everything possible would be done. Later, after five hours of conversations at the White House, the President announced that Dulles would go to Mississippi.